# Influence of Parent and Peer Attachment on Self-Concept and Perceived Social Competence among Middle Adolescents

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The International Journal of
**INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY**

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Volume 3

**Special Issue**

October, 2015

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## ABSTRACT

The study attempted to explore the influence of attachment with mother, father and peers on self-concept and perceived social competence among middle adolescents. The study also attempted to predict the relationship between self-concept and perceived social competence. The sample consisted of 190 adolescents (101 females and 89 males) between the ages of 14 to 16 years. The participants were selected through the purposive sampling method. The questionnaires administered to the participants include Inventory of Parent and Peer attachment (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987), Self-Concept Questionnaire (Saraswat, 1980) and the Social Competence tool (Child Trends, 2012). The results of the study revealed that attachment with mother and peers significantly predicts self-concept; attachment with mother also significantly predicts perceived social competence and finally self-concept significantly perceived Social Competence. Attachment with father did not predict self-concept or perceived social competence of middle adolescents. From the results, it can be observed that secure attachment with mother paves the way for the adolescent to develop secure relationships with peers and a better understanding of self. In addition, the better the self-concept the adolescent has about himself or herself, the better he/she is able to meet his/her goals while maintaining good relations with peers. Therefore, the mother-child relationship is an important relationship that will significantly affect the adolescent's mental health. Hence, much importance should be given to develop a good attachment with the mother. And an adolescent who has a good relationship with his/her peers has a good understanding of self, thus, strategies can be developed to help the adolescent to have a better view of self so that he/she can also develop a good metal health.

*Key words*: Adolescence, Attachment, Self-Concept, Perceived Social Competence

## INTRODUCTION

"When you're different, sometimes you don't see the millions of people who accept you for what you are. All you notice is the person who doesn't."— Jodi Picoult, Change of Heart.

We all long to be accepted by the people around us whom we love. When we feel loved and accepted by them, we are satisfied in life and are able to buffer easily from the negative influences that life sometimes puts us through. When people do not have a strong social support they are much more susceptible to suffer from various mental illnesses. One such important relationship is our attachment with parents. Attachment with parents is an important concept that helps to understand the relationship between a parent and child from the time of birth. This attachment pattern also helps in formulating a sense of self in adolescence and also forms a basis for us to be competent in our interaction with peers. The study will explore the three variables- attachment with parent and peers, self-concept and perceived social competence among middle adolescents.

Erickson (1968) defined adolescence as a period of turmoil, emotional upheaval, identity crisis and conflict with parents. Adolescence has been described as a transition between childhood to adulthood that involves socio-emotional, biological and cognitive changes (Santrock, 2007). According to Erickson, (1963) adolescence is a crucial period during which they learn to form their identity (as cited in Cicchetti & Toth, 1997). According to Horrocks and Benimoff (1970), the adolescents peer group is his real world and his peers help him to formulate and revise his concept of self. Therefore it is important that the adolescent selects a group that makes him feel accepted and he should be able to depend on them when in need (as cited in Aggarwal, 2007).

### Attachment
Attachment is a class of social behavior. Attachment provides a child with self-confidence, autonomy and the social and emotional tools needed to develop a relationship within the social world. Bowlby (1969) defined attachment behavior early in development by a child's need to seek proximity (as cited in Carlivati, 2001).

According to Bowlby's (1969) theory of attachment, an infant can be observed as having a secure attachment by preferring to be with the mother who is the attachment figure for the child. This secure attachment is also observed in three years olds who are able to be attached to 'subordinate attachment figures' such as relatives, and the child feels that he/she will be in contact with the mother later (Bowlby, 1969). When children grow older, their relationship with others is based on their relationship with their mothers or primary caregivers. Thus, Sroufe and Waters (1977) reported that the mother-child relationship will influence outside relationships as well. Insecurely attached children feel less of an assurance of the availability and helpfulness of their caregivers when they are in distress (Bowlby, 1969). Bowlby (1973) found that they

perceive their parents to be unreliable in times of discomfort Hence, according to Bowlby (1977) children's insecure attachment pattern with parents influences an individual's personality and adjustment exhibiting emotional distress than are securely attached individuals due their negative organizations on interpersonal relationships (as cited in Carlivati, 2001).

Armsdem and Greenberg (1987) explain that attachment relationships help children to buffer from the harmful effects such as emotional distress, depression and anxiety, which occurs when individuals are undergoing a period of turmoil (as cited in Carlivati, 2001). This buffering hypothesis is particularly important to attachment during the adolescent years, as it is essentially a period of transition. Allen and Land (1999) found that the adolescents changing mood, the often changes in their nature of relationships and their strife for independence from their parents makes adolescence a period of continual activation of the attachment system (as cited in Carlivati, 2001). Hence, current research explains that attachment relationships and attachment organization continues to be of importance during adolescence.

Allen et al. (1998) studied that attachment continues to influence adolescents and their perceptions of others. Insecure attachment organizations during the adolescent years results in difficulties when interacting with others as well as perception of others which leads to social problems throughout life. For this reason, Bowbly's (1989) attachment theory concludes that there is a causal relationship between attachment with parents and one's ability to develop positive relationships with others (as cited in Carlivati, 2001)

According to Allen and Land's (1999) theory on the purpose of attachment during childhood, attachment during adolescence is seen as an internal organization rather an external organization as it is during the early years of infancy. The internal organization of attachment works as a working model for the adolescent to form interpersonal relationships. Pianta et al. (1997) found that a child's attachment with his/her caregiver also influences the child's behavior and interaction with peers. According to Bowlby (1973), this internal working model reflects an adolescent's state of mind regarding interpersonal and attachment relationships allowing for one's expectations of others to remain constant throughout life. Therefore, the adolescent's attachment security is an integrated view of relationships rather than a characteristic of his/her relationship with the parent. Several studies have shown that an individual's attachment with peers correlates with his/her attachment with parents. Lieberman, Doyle, and Markiewicz (1999) found that the self reports of closeness in peer relationship are linked with perceived attachment with parent. According to Kobak and Sceery (1988), adolescent's attachment with parents is correlated with social support from peers (as cited in Carlivati, 2001). Therefore, attachment with parents does influence an individual's social relationships outside the home.

According to Casidy et al. (1996) having a secure relationship with parents enables an adolescent to develop secure representations and expectations from their peers which leads to an

enhancement of the quality of relationship with their peers (as cited in Claudia and Huebner, 2008). This research finding is consistent with Bowbly's theory of attachment relationships as well as other researchers who contend that the social skills that adolescents learn from their parents are generalized to their relationship with their peers. Rubin et al. (2004) found that the perceived social support provided by parents to their adolescent children lead to fewer externalizing issues and higher global social competence (as cited in Claudia and Huebner, 2008).

### *Self-Concept*
During adolescence, the parental attachment pattern formed during early years of life acts like an internal working model of the self. Adolescents incorporate aspects of self as lovable or worthy based on their attachment with parents. This attachment forms a basis for the adolescent to develop a positive sense of self.

Franken (1994) stated that self-concept is the way people think about themselves (as cited in Cengage Learning, 2007). It is a global understanding of ourselves which defines who we are, the decisions we make and the relationships we form. Self-concept is unique, dynamic and is always evolving. It affects ones identity, self esteem, body image and role in a society. A positive self-concept leads to healthy social relationships. Individuals with a positive self-concept are successful and happy. A person's self-concept contains evolving subjective conscious and unconscious assessments. As a person's occupation, physical attributes, knowledge and the abilities change, one's self-concepts changes as well.

Gallagher (2000) suggests that self concept is formed by two major sources of information - direct appraisals and reflected appraisals. Direct appraisal is what we understand from our reactions to events and experiences in the past whereas reflected appraisals are abstracted from our beliefs about how we are perceived by others, this concept is known as the looking glass self (as cited in Sebastian, Burnett & Blackemore, 2008). According to Harter (1990), research in developmental psychology contends that our evaluation of ourselves becomes comprehensive and differentiated during childhood and adolescence (as cited in Sebastian, Burnett, & Blackemore, 2008). By the time children reach early adolescence, they are more likely to compare themselves with others and realize that others are also making comparisons and judgments; and they usually begin to place high value on the judgments they receive. Thus, the looking glass self places a larger role on the adolescents self-concept.

Adolescence is a period when they go through several changes biologically and psychologically. Negative comments and reactions from ones peer's on body image can lead an adolescent to engage in substance abuse, inappropriate behaviors and eating disorders in order to feel that they fit in. Such negative comments from peers lead to anxiety and depression among them. Therefore, it is important that the adolescent builds a healthy self-concept and selects a peer

group that will accept his real self. Self-concept is greatly influenced by their parents' involvement, attachment and parenting style. Even though adolescents want to attain their freedom at this period of life, they still need the love, support and involvement of their parents and peers.

Adolescence is a period during which the self-concept changes profoundly (Blakemore et al., 2008). Parker et al. (2006) found that during this period, adolescents become increasingly conscious of themselves and are more aware and concerned about others opinions about them (as cited in Sebastian, Burnett & Blackemore, 2008). According to the Lapsley's (1991) 'New Look Theory' adolescents need to develop an identity separate from their parents. As a result they continually question who they are and how they fit in and become increasingly self conscious leading to 'imaginary audience' (the belief that others are constantly observing and evaluating them even when it is not actually true). Hence, individuals in the adolescent's social context also influence their self-concept. Davey et al. (2008) reported that the positive social feedback that adolescents receive is rewarding whereas the negative social feedback leads to affective disorders like depression (as cited in Sebastian, Burnett, & Blackemore, 2008). Ybrandt (2008) observed that a negative self-concept is related to both internalizing behaviors (depression and anxiety) and externalizing behaviors (aggression and delinquency) (as cited in Sebastian, Burnett & Blackemore, 2008).

Furman and Buhrmester (1992) found that during adolescence, children form deeper and lasting relationship with their peers, than prior to this period (as cited in Pant, 2009). Therefore, Bowlby (1988) and Cotterell (1992) said that at this point of their development, adolescents engage in several activities that help them gain a sense of independence from their parents and also build trust and new sustaining relationships with their peers (as cited in Pant, 2009). Piaget (1965) studied that adolescents use these relationships outside their homes to develop their identity and a sense of self by comparing their views and opinions with others (as cited in Pant, 2009).

According to Bowlby (1980) the parental attachments are a source of security and support which contributes to the adolescent's internal working model of self (as cited in Selby, 2000). Attachment theory predicts that an adolescent will have an internal representation as worthwhile, loveable and good when the attachment figures in their life are reliable, available and responsive. Kenny and Rice (1995) reported that a secure working model of self or a positive self-concept may prevent an adolescent from being susceptible to the environmental stressors and developmental challenges (as cited in Selby, 2000).

### Social Competence
Attachment helps an individual to develop a sense of self and an understanding of self increases during adolescence. They spend more time with their peers and learn how they associate with others. And the parental attachment formed provides a model for the adolescent to relate to their

peers. For this reason, a secure attachment pattern and a positive sense of sense helps in being more socially competent among peers.

Social competence as defined by Krasnor (1992) is the ability to achieve personal goals in social interaction while simultaneously maintaining a positive relationship with others over time and across settings (as cited in Katz, 2004). Mendes, McDermott, and Fantuzzo, (2002) reported that social competence is crucial for personal adjustment, mental health and social and academic success in childhood through early adulthood (as cited in Chae & Lee, 2011). Studies have shown the relationship between early attachment and social competence of children of all age groups. During adolescence, social competence helps develop intimate relationships by forming deeper commitment in friendships (Katz, 1994). Englund et al. (2000) found that a highly socially competent adolescent will be able to coordinate intimate relationship both within group interactions and the larger social network (as cited in Katz, 2004).

A child's social competence depends on a number of factors such as their self confidence, social awareness and social skills. Social skills are described as the child's ability to use a number of social behaviors that are appropriate for a given interpersonal situation and are pleasing to the people in each situation. The capacity to inhibit negative behaviors and impulsive and egocentric behaviors is also termed as having social skills. Children who are emotionally intelligent have the ability to understand others emotions, read subtle social cues and show insight about others motivations and goals. A child's anxiety and self confidence can also affect ones social competence (Welsh & Bierman, 2014).

During the early years of life, parents are the primary source of a child's social and emotional development, however, later in life the child's peers become the significant source in promoting their socio-emotional development. During adolescence, especially, one's peers play an important role in being socially competent. At this stage of development, adolescents are learning to create a self identity-the understanding of the kind of person they are, and so they are constantly trying on different social roles as they interact with their peers. The peer relations during adolescence provide a training ground for them to develop interpersonal skills such as intimacy and reciprocity needed in adult life when relating with co-workers and romantic partners (Welsh & Bierman, 2014).

Waters and Sroufe (1983) said that Social competence is viewed as a developmental construct because it changes as development proceeds. The individual's quality of adaption with respect to their salient developmental tasks is central to the definition of competence from a developmental perspective (as cited in Englund, Levy, Hyson & Sroufe, 2000). During adolescence, social competence is seen as a complex construct as it involves a number of issues. Sroufe et al. (1999) suggested that these include the formation of intimate relationships (both romantic and friendships), forming a deeper commitment and sustaining relationships among peers than previously to relationships which includes having greater self-disclosure and emotional vulnerability. These reasons also include being able to function within a network of relationships

and the ability to coordinate among these intimate relationships with both within group interactions and the outer social networks (as cited in Englund et al., 2000)**.**

During adolescence, children learn to gain a sense of self. They learn to sort how their identities fit the social group expectations that they are a part of. As an understanding of self increases, they become more aware of their peer group norms and expectations, and increasingly associate with their peer groups to evaluate their own and other's social behavior (Welsh & Bierman, 2014).

Allen et al. (1998) found secure attachment predicted an adolescent's social competence (as cited in Claudia & Huebner, 2008). Allen et al. suggest that the ability of securely attached adolescents to process attachment related emotions is linked to several aspects of psychosocial development during adolescence. Therefore, evidence suggests that there is a relationship between attachment pattern and the internal working model for different types of social interactions throughout childhood and adolescence.

According to various researchers, attachment with parents affects an adolescent's relationship with their peers. Depending on their attachment pattern with their parents, they learn to form meaningful and successful relationship with their peers. Their peers and parents also help to form the adolescent's self-concept and social competence. Several researchers have mentioned that developing a healthy self-concept is crucial at this stage of development as the adolescent is learning to understand him/herself more clearly. It is also important that the adolescent maintains a peer group that accepts him for how he/she perceives oneself as. When an adolescent is accepted by his peers he learns to develop a healthy mental health and perception of oneself.

### *Rationale of the study*
Attachment with parents does affect an adolescent's emotions, cognitions and behaviors. In today's scenario, there is an increase in the number of unstable families. When families break due to divorce or other reasons, parents become emotionally distant from their children. Even children who have both parents working do not get to have enough quality time with their children. Therefore, these children are unable to develop a secure attachment pattern with their parents. Developing a strong attachment with parents and peers helps one to develop a positive view of themselves in spite of their dissatisfaction with their physical, intellectual, educational and social image which will affect the way in which they relate with their peers and the extent to which they are accepted by them.

So the present study will help to explore the relationship between parent and peer attachment, self-concept and perceived social competence considering today's scenario which will help to reflect on the mental health (Ybrandt, 2008), interpersonal communications and relationships with both parents and peers among adolescents.

**REVIEW OF LITERATURE**
Review of literature is done to help understand the background work and to develop the methodological guidelines of this study. It will also help to derive hypothesis and understand the different problems that need to be explored. The variables explored in this study are attachment between parent and peer, self-concept and perceived social competence among middle adolescents.

*Attachment with Parents and Peers*
Several studies have attempted to study attachment with parents and peers and its influence on adolescent's mental health and relationship with others. This is because attachment provides a child with self-confidence, independence, and emotional and social tools needed to develop successful relationship with others in order to be better adjusted within the society (Carlivati, 2001). For this reason, attachment is an important concept that the study has attempted to measure.

A study on adolescent's attachment and its influence on their psychosocial functioning was explored by Allen, Moore, Kuperminc and Bell (1998). They selected 131 adolescents between the age of 14 to 18 years (66 males and 65 females). The sample consisted of European American (66%), African American (33%) and other (1%). The findings suggest that adolescents security in their attachment organization was related to their social competence (as reported by their peers), low levels of internalizing behaviors (as reported by the adolescents), low levels to deviant behaviors (as reported by their peers and mothers). The results therefore explain that an adolescent's attachment experiences are related to wide range aspects of psychosocial development.

A Meta analytical was study done by Gorrese and Ruggieri (2012) which reviewed gender and age differences in relation to peer attachment and its associations with parent attachment. The findings observed in the study include that adolescents who have a secure attachment with their parents also report having a secure attachment with their peers. The secure attachment with parents provides a relationship model with their close friends and gives a greater capacity for closeness and separateness in relationship with friends. The results also show that attachment pattern with mothers is closely related to attachment with peers. Other findings are related to gender which suggest that girls are more attached to their peers than boys and scored higher on two major dimensions- trust and communication. They further found that girls have deeper and interdependent relationship with peers that consisted of nurturance and empathy. Boys on the other hand, seek a companion with whom they share their interests, activities and hobbies. The study also noted that there were no age differences related with peer attachment.

Carlivati (2001) investigated the influence of Adolescent Attachment to Parents and Peer Relationships, and how both these variables affect School Success. The sample selected for the

study included 166 ninth and tenth graders (89 male, 77 female). The sample consisted of European-American (59.6%), American African (38.6%) and other (1.8%). The findings of the study suggest that having a secure attachment pattern with parents leads an adolescent to have a higher peer group acceptance. This finding is consistent with Attachment theory as, attachment pattern provides an internal friendship model to form peer relations. Self reported measurements of the adolescents perceived attachment pattern was also strongly correlated to the adolescents self perception of peer acceptance. Both the self reported and the peer reported acceptance was related to academic factors such as discipline and academic competence. The findings also suggest that peer relations acts as a mediator between attachment with parents and school performance. However, independent relations between each of the three variables could also exit. The final relationship found include that there is an interaction between perceived attachment with parents and social competence and the adolescent's school outcomes.

Claudia and Huebner (2008) investigated how an early adolescents parent and peer attachment relationships contribute to their life satisfaction and whether peer attachment acts as a mediator between parental attachment and life satisfaction,  how some relationships matter more to girls than to boys. The sample consisted of 1,201 participants chosen between the age group of 10 to 16 American early adolescents from five middle schools. This study found that there were no significant differences in parental attachment; however, girls had a stronger attachment with their peers than boys. For girls the quality of their attachment relationship with their parents does generalize to the quality of the relation they share with their peers but this was not observed among boys. It was also found there was a relationship between the early adolescent's attachment relationship with their parents and life global life satisfaction for girls and boys.

Baharudin, Chiah and Zulkefly (2010) studied how perceived paternal and maternal attachment influences social adjustment among early adolescents. A sample of 1,349 adolescents was selected between the ages of 12 to 15 years from Pakistan. The study found that father and mothers influence an adolescent's adjustment differently. Early adolescents who had an insecure attachment pattern with their fathers tend to have severe adjustments difficulty in peers, emotions and conduct problems and strong secure maternal attachment promotes pro-social behavior.

A study investigating the relation of attachment security of adolescents to their parental and peer relationships, depression and externalizing behavior was conducted by Allen, Porter, McFarland, McElhaney and Marsh (2007). The sample consisted of 167 seventh and eighth graders (mean age of 13 years) of both genders were part of this longitudinal study. The participants were Caucasians (52%), African American (27%) and other (21%). The findings of the study revealed that adolescents who have secure attachment with their parents are able to maintain a sense of autonomy from them and a sense of relatedness with them. The study also suggests that an adolescent's maternal secure attachment is not strongly linked to their security with peers. An adolescent's insecure attachment with parents was strongly linked to increasing pattern of

externalizing behavior and a higher and stable pattern of depressive symptoms across the period of adolescence. Therefore the study shows that an adolescent's attachment system is connected to a number of domains of adolescent functioning.

### *Self-Concept*

Self-concept changes with development. Self-concept plays an important role during adolescence as one learns to form an identity. Adolescents constantly question who they are and how they fit in amongst their peers. Hence, it is important to develop a good understanding of self in order for the adolescent to feel that they are a part of a group that accepts him for who he is (Sebastian, Burnett & Blackemore, 2008). Therefore, the study aims to explore this variable among adolescents and its relation with attachment and social competence.

An article written by Marshall (1989) focuses on the development of self-concept. According to the findings of the research, self-concept is the perception, feelings and attitudes that an individual has about him/herself. Self-concept and self image are used interchangeably and it is an individual's overall conception of oneself. Self-concept affects the way we relate to others. In Marshall's article, a positive self-concept leads to good mental health, academic achievement and behavior. Self-concept is influenced by external factors such as parents or primary caregivers. The kind of environment parents provide greatly affects self-concept. The responsiveness of the parent also helps the child to become competent to control his/her environment. This helps in developing feelings of self worth, personal control and competence. Peer relationship also affects a child's social self-concept. Therefore helping children to interact effectively will help develop their social self-concept.

### *Social Competence*

Social competence is a development construct. Social competence is important for adjustment, mental health and social success especially during adolescence when children spend most of their time with their peers and learn to be independent from their parents (Chae & Lee, 2011). Therefore, the purpose of the study was to explore adolescents social competence is relation to their attachment with their parents and peers and whether self-concept predicted social competence.

A study on social competence among high school students in Shillong, India was explored by Syiem and Nongrum (2014). The sample consisted of 83 students (35 males and 48 females) who were 14 and 15 years. The students of the sample were randomly selected from five different schools in Shillong, India. The findings of the study suggest that most of students were found to have average social competence. No significant difference was found between males and female in terms of their level of social competence. They also found a significant difference in social competence among government and private school. Government school students were found to have a higher social competence than Private school students. Finally social competence

and academic achievement were not significantly related. A major limitation of this study is the small sample size. However, the study has provided a level of social competence students in India have.

### *Relationship between Self-Concept and Attachment*
The following are the studies explored by researchers that investigated how attachment and self-concept are related.

Doyle, Markiewicz, Brendgen, Lieberman and Woss (2000) investigated how a child's attachment security and self-concept is associated with mother and father's attachment style and marital security. 170 elementary school and 159 high school middle class students were selected to represent the sample. The sample of parents was White (88%), Black (9%) and Asian (2%). The study's findings state that a child, who was less securely attached to the mother, had a mother who had an anxious avoidant attachment with their spouse. In the study parents attachment style highly correlated with the child's attachment style, however, the parents marital quality did not correlate with the child's attachment style. The study also suggests that attachment security continues to be of importance as a determinant of adjustment in middle childhood and in early adolescence both in with parent-child relationship and outside. The study confirmed that it is the mother's attachment style that significantly related to a child's attachment style. Child's attachment security with each parent was also highly correlated to subjective well being in all the domains of self-concept. Adolescent's attachment with father was highly correlated to general self-concept but not in younger children.

Selby (2000) studied the relationships of parent attachment, peer attachment and self-concept on the adjustment of first year college students. The sample consisted of 181 first year Psychology students between the ages 18 to 20 from the University of Texas. The participants were of equal number of males and female who were equivalent in terms of age. The study found that maternal attachment was significantly related to the adolescent's positive self-concept for both men and women. For men, having a secure relationship with peers was related to positive levels of self-concept. For women, a secure attachment with father was significantly related to their positive level of self-concept. The study also suggested that for both men and women their secure attachment with peers was significantly related to their adjustment level in college while maintaining a secure maternal attachment. Significant differences in the way men and women view the father, mother and peer attachment was not found.

Nishikawa, Hagglof, and Sundbom (2009) observed how attachment pattern with peers and one's self-concept contribute to internalizing and externalizing problems among Japanese adolescents. The sample included 268 adolescents (188 males & 80 females) who were studying in a public school in a middle class neighborhood in Japan. The age group for the sample was 15 to 19 years (mean age of 16.4 years). The findings of the study suggest that securely attached individuals

have less mental health problems and a positive self-concept. Insecurely attached adolescents have both internalizing and externalizing problems. Gomez and McLaren (2007) stated that an adolescent's poor self concept is related to their perceptions of a maladaptive family functions, which in turn leads to externalizing problems (as cited in Nishikawa, Hagglof, & Sundbom, 2009). The adolescent's attachment is related to their self-concept in the case of internalizing problems. When adolescents perceive their worlds as undependable or untrustworthy, they are more likely to develop disorders like depression, and anxiety and withdraw from social situations. The present study helped understand that adolescent's perception of their relationships plays an important role in how they perceive themselves and their emotional or behavioral issues.

### *Relationship between Self-Concept and Social Competence*
The following is study by Mpofu and Thomas (2006) which has explored how self-concept and social competence are related.

Mpofu and Thomas (2006) studied how racial proportion affects self-concept and social competence. 372 Zimbabwean adolescents (208 boys, 164 girls; 153 Black & 219 White) were selected to represent the sample. The findings of the study suggest that there is a relationship between self-concept and social competence when adolescents are placed in the classrooms where their race is the majority. The two variables (self-concept & social competence) are not correlated when adolescents are placed in a classroom in which their race is a minority. This finding illustrates that racial proposition in a classroom affects an adolescents overall self-concept and social competence. The Black students peer and self reported social competence were positively related to the Black adolescent's school self-concept in the Black majority classroom. Hence the study suggests that there is a high correlation between self-concept and social competence in within race rather than between race groups.

### *Relationship between Attachment and Social Competence*
The following are studies done by several researchers to portray the relationship between attachment and social competence among adolescents.

A longitudinal study was investigated by Weinfield, Ogawa and Sroufe (1997) on early attachment as a pathway to adolescent peer competence. In the study, 43 adolescents (21 males and 22 females) were observed at a summer camp reunion and were a subgroup of an ongoing longitudinal study. The racial distribution of individuals in the study was 68% White, 12% African American and 20% mixed racial background. The findings of the study suggest that adolescents who were in the anxious group had high social competence behaviorally when they scored high on the dimensions of expressed interest in and knowledge about relationships. In contrast, securely attached individuals do not have to be high on these dimensions in order to be socially competent. Elicker et al. (1990) suggested that secure attachment during the early years

of life acts as a pathway for social competence (as cited in Weinfield et al., 1997). Therefore securely attached adolescents do not have to put effort in being interested in the processes of social network to become socially competent as they have carried the necessary skills and expectations of reciprocity and efficacy from their early attachment. However, anxious attached individuals can also become socially competent if they have invested more into being socially competent. Bretherton (1985) said that the investment of effort may be a result of other life experiences such as important relationships beyond the attachment with the primary care giver which allowed for the modification of the internal working model (as cited in Weinfield et al. 1997)

According to the review of literatures, an adolescent's attachment pattern with parents does significantly affect their psychosocial functioning (Allen et al., 1998) and internalizing and externalizing behaviors (Marsh, 2007). A study by Gorrese and Ruggieri (2012) showed that an adolescent's attachment organization with parents was related to their attachment pattern with their peers. According to Claudia and Huebner (2008) and Gorrese and Ruggieri (2012) girls tend to have a stronger attachment pattern with peers than boys. Studies also suggest that insecure attachment with father more strongly predict early adolescent's adjustment problems whereas secure maternal attachment promotes pro-social behavior (Baharudin, Chiah & Zulkefly, 2010).

According to the article by Marshall (1989) an adolescent's self- concept is significantly influenced by their relationship with their parents and peers. A study by Nishikawa, Hagglof, and Sundbom (2009) also suggests that an adolescent's self- concept was highly related to their attachment security with both parents. Nishikawa, Hagglof, and Sundbom (2009) investigated that an adolescent's secure attachment with peers is significantly related to their positive self-concept. Therefore adolescents who perceive their world to be undependable and untrustworthy are likely to develop a negative self-concept. Selby (2000) suggested that maternal attachment was more significantly related to the individual's positive self-concept.

There is also a relationship between self-concept and social competence when adolescents are placed in within race groups rather than between race groups (Mpofu & Thomas, 2006). A longitudinal study done by Weinfield, Ogawa and Sroufe (1997) showed that compared to securely attached adolescents, anxiously attached adolescents have to invest more in their relationships in order to be socially competent as they have not developed the skills of reciprocity and efficacy from their early parent relationships.

The findings of the articles conclude that attachment pattern with parents and peer influences the adolescents self-concept and social competence as several studies have indicated that a significant relationship exist between all the variables. Therefore, with this understanding the

variables in the study will be tested to study the prediction between attachment pattern between parents and peers and self-concept and social competence.

## METHOD
### *Research Questions*
The research questions of the study include:
- Whether attachment pattern with mother, father and peers predicts an adolescent's self-concept?
- Whether attachment pattern with mother, father and peers predicts an adolescent's perceived social competence?
- Whether an adolescent's self-concept predicts his/her perceived social competence?

### *Objectives*
The objectives of the study are:
- To predict the relationship between attachment pattern with mother, father and peers on the adolescents self-concept.
- To predict the relationship between attachment pattern with mother, father and peers on adolescents perceived social competence.
- To predict the relationship between adolescents self-concept and perceived social competence.

### *Hypotheses*
H1: Attachment pattern with mother, father and peers significantly predicts an adolescent's self-concept.

H2: Attachment pattern with mother, father and peers significantly predicts an adolescent's perceived social competence.

H3: Self-concept significantly predicts an adolescent's perceived social competence.

### *Operational Definition*
**Attachment pattern.** Attachment pattern between parents and peers is the total score that the adolescent receives on the Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment. Attachment pattern is the perception of the positive and negative affective and cognitive domains of the adolescent's relationship with their parents and peers (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987)

**Self-concept.** Self concept is the total score obtained by the adolescent on the Self-Concept scale by Saraswat**.** Saraswat (1980) describes self-concept as the individual's view of looking at oneself. It also signifies one's way of thinking, feeling and behaving.

**Social competence.** Social competence is the total score obtained by the adolescent on the social competence tool developed by Child Trends for Templeton Foundation as part of the Flourishing Children's Project in 2012. The Templeton Project has defined Social Competence as a set of

positive social skills needed to get along with others and function constructively in groups including respecting and expressing appreciation for others, being able to listen to other's ideas and communicate and work well with them, being able to demonstrate context specific behaviors expected by the social norms and able to use a range of skills and processes in order to effectively resolve conflicts.

**Middle Adolescence.** Middle adolescence is characterized by individuals between the ages of 14 to 16. At this stage, adolescents struggle with their bodies as they are emotionally immature with an adult body. Middle adolescents begin to think abstractly and are able to make decisions by using logic to achieve a workable solution to a problem (Colyar, 2011)

### Research design
 A quantitative research method was used to study the relationship between the three variables. A quantitative research was used to study the techniques and methods for the measurement of attributes, the statistical and the mathematical modeling of psychological processes, the design of research studies and the analysis of psychological data (Aiken, West, Sechrest, & Reno, 1990). A corelational research design was used for this study.  A co-relational design is a quantitative method in which two or more variables are studied to understand if there is a relationship between them. This study is done to understand the relationship between attachment pattern on self-concept and perceived social competence and the relationship between self-concept and perceived social competence. Therefore a correlational method is the most appropriate for this study.

### Sampling
**Selection of Participants.** The participants are selected by the purposive sampling method. In purposive sampling technique, a researcher describes the characteristics of the population of interest and locates individuals with those interests. The participants were selected based on the criteria's set by the researcher to study the variables.

**Participants.** The sample size was represented by 190 middle adolescents (101 females and 89 males) from the city of Bangalore. The sample consisted of middle adolescents between age group of 14 -16 years with a means age of 15.1 years. All the participants were Indians and therefore belonged to the same racial group.  Questionnaires were administered to 215 adolescents but only those who met the criteria were selected to be a part of the study. The following were the criteria used to select the sample:

### Inclusion criteria.
- Both males and females were selected to represent the sample.
- Adolescents between the ages of 14-16 are a part of the study.

- All the participants in the study are Indians with both biological parents present in their lives.

*Exclusion criteria.*
- Adolescents from residential schools.

*Research Instruments*

**Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment (Revised) - Armsden and Greenberg (1987).** The inventory of parent and peer attachment is a self report questionnaire that measures both positive and negative affective and cognitive domains of an adolescents relationship with their parents and peers. The scale measures the extent to which the adolescent is psychological secure with each of the parent and their peers. The revised version measures attachment with mother, father and peers therefore yielding to three attachment scores for the adolescent. The IPPA is a five point likert scale and has a total of 75 items (25 items for each dimension). The three attachment domains are measured based on trust, alienation and communication. The items 3,6,8,9,10,11,14,17,18 and 23 are reversely scored for both parents and items 4,5,9,10, 11,18,22, and 23 are reversely scored for measuring peer attachment. The internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for the revised version of the scale is .87 for mother attachment, .89 for father attachment and for peer attachment it is .92. The items in the scale are moderately to highly related to the items in the family and social self scores from the Tennessee Self-concept scale. It is also related to the subscales from the family environment scale (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987). The internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for attachment with father found in this study was .87, .86 for attachment with mother and .83 for attachment with peers.

**Self-concept Scale- Saraswat (1980)**. This scale measures self-concept on six areas-temperamental, social, physical, educational, intellectual and moral. It is a 48 item questionnaire that measures the self-concept of children between 14 and 18 years old. Each dimension of the test contains eight items which have five alternatives each ranging from most acceptable to least acceptable description of self-concept. The alternative responses for all the items range from 5,4,3,2 and 1 whether the items are positive or negative. The total score of the 48 item questionnaire reveals the total self-concept score for the adolescent. A high score indicates a high self-concept and a low score indicates a low self-concept. Reliability for this questionnaire was found to be .91 found by the test-retest method. The reliability for the various dimensions range from .67 to .88. To the test validity of this inventory, expert opinions by 25 psychologists were obtained to classify the items to the category to which they belong. The items of highest agreement and not less than 80% were selected as part of the inventory. Therefore, the scale shows high content and construct validity. The internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the self-concept scale found for this study is .83.

**Social competence tool – Child Trends (2012).** The Child Trends created a Social Competence Tool as part of their Templeton Foundation. This tool contains nine items which measures the Social competence of children between the ages of 12-17. It is four point likert scale which ranges from none of the time, a little of the time, some of the time, most of the time to all of the time. The scoring of the items ranges from 1 to 4 so the total score obtained by a child is 36. The tool has an excellent reliability of alpha .79 and concurrent validity. The internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha) of the social competence tool found for this study is .61.

*Procedure*

A purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants. Several schools were contacted to know if they were willing to let their students participate in the research. Three schools confirmed their participation with the agreement of the principal. The permission from the School Principal was obtained before selecting the participants. The permission was obtained by submitting a copy of the proposal to the Principal. After obtaining the permission to conduct the study, a letter from the Principal was shown to the respective class teachers of 8th, 9th and 10th. After showing the permission letter to the teachers, students from 8th, 9th and 10th grades were selected from three schools in Bangalore to complete the questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered in groups within the classroom setting and with the presence of a teacher. The amount of time taken to complete the questionnaires was 45 minutes. The participants were made aware of confidentiality and were asked to complete the consent form. The three tests (Inventory of Parent and Peer Attachment, Self-Concept scale and Social Competence scale) were administered to the adolescents. After completing the questionnaires, the participants were debriefed what the study is about and the rationale behind it. Scores of each test was then calculated and analyzed to find out the relationship between them. The analysis was done to find out if there is a relationship between attachment pattern with parents and peers on self-concept and perceived social competence, and the relationship between self-concept and perceived social competence.

*Statistical Analysis*

First the variables were tested for correlational analysis to study if there is a relationship between them. After a perfect relationship was found between all the variables, regression analysis was followed. A regression analysis was done to predict the relationship between an adolescents attachment pattern with mother, father and peers on his/her self concept and perceived social competence and also to predict the relationship between an adolescents self concept and perceived social competence.

*Ethical Considerations*

Before conducting the study, the subjects in the study were given a consent form. This is done to understand whether the individual wishes to participate in the study or not. The participants were also informed that their results will be kept confidential and there will not be any sort of mental

or physical harm done to them. Once the consent form was signed, the participants were given the questionnaires. After the questionnaires were completed, the participants were informed what the study attempts to measure.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to explore the relationship between attachment pattern with mother father and peer on self concept and perceived social competence among middle adolescents in Bangalore. Data was collected from 190 adolescents between the ages of 14 to 16 studying in three schools in Bangalore. First the test for normality was done. As the data did not fit the test for normality, Spearman Correlation Coefficient was done to test the relationship between the variables. A significant correlation was found between all the variables at $p < .01$ and $p < .05$ level, hence regression analysis was further conducted to study the prediction between them. The results of the variables are presented below.

### Results

The following are the results of the study. The test for Normality is presented below.

**Test for Normality.** The test for normality shows whether the data forms a normal distribution curve or not. Based on the test for normality a parametric or a non parametric test is carried out to study the relationship between the variables.

*Figure 1, The test of Normality for Attachment Pattern with Mother, Father, Peers, Self-Concept and Perceived Social Competence.*

| Variables | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Statistic | *df* | Sig. |
| Attachment with mother | .956 | 190 | .000 |
| Attachment with father | .976 | 190 | .002 |
| Attachment with peers | .966 | 190 | .000 |
| Self-concept | .946 | 190 | .000 |
| Perceived Social Competence | .990 | 190 | .241 |

Normality was tested for the independent variables (attachment pattern with mother, father, and peers), the dependent variable (self-concept) and the second dependent variable (perceived social competence). According to the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality, the significance of the variables were- attachment with mother ($p< .00$), attachment with father ($p< .00$), and attachment with peers ($p< .00$), self-concept (p< .00) and social competence  ($p< .24$). A test is considered normal if all the variables have a significance level above .05. According to the data only social competence met the criteria for normality whereas all the other variables did not. Thus, the test

for normality was not met. For this reason, Spearman correlation coefficient test was used to test the relationship among all the variables.

**Spearman Correlation Coefficient Test**. As normality was not met, the Spearman correlation coefficient was used to find out the relationship between attachment with mother, father and peers with self-concept and perceived social competence among middle adolescents.

*Table 2 Spearman Correlation Coefficient showing relationship between Attachment Pattern and Self-Concept and Perceived Social Competence.*

| Variables | Attachment with mother | Attachment with father | Attachment with peers | Self-concept | Social Competence |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Attachment With Mother | 1.00 . | | | | |
| Attachment With Father | .607** | 1.00 | | | |
| Attachment With Peers | .416** | .342** | 1.00 | | |
| Self-concept | .353** | .204** | .348** | 1.00 | |
| Perceived Social Competence | .289** | .178* | .218** | .269** | 1.00 |

$**p<.01, *p<.05$

From the above table, it can be inferred that a significant relationship was found between attachment pattern with mother on self concept ($r= .35, p< .01$) and perceived social competence ($r= .28, p< .01$). A significant relationship was also found between attachment pattern with father on self-concept ($r= .20, p < .01$) and perceived social competence ($r= .17, p< .05$). Additionally, a significant relationship was found between peer attachment and self concept ($r= .34, p< .01$) and perceived social competence ($r= .20, p< .01$). Finally a relationship was also found between self-concept and perceived social competence ($r= .26, p< .01$).

The results support the conclusion that there is a significant relationship between attachment with mother, father and peers and self-concept, a significant relationship between attachment with mother, father and peers and perceived social competence, and a significant relationship between self-concept and perceived social competence.

As perfect correlation was found between all the variables, regression analysis was further done to study the prediction effect among the variables.

**Regression Analysis**. Hypothesis one states that attachment pattern with mother, father and peers will significantly predict self-concept among middle adolescents. The step wise regression method was followed to study the attachment pattern that significantly predicts self-concept. The step wise regression analysis selects the predictor that best predicts the outcome variable. This is done by selecting the variable that has the highest correlation with the outcome variable. The predictor is retained if it significantly improves the ability of the model; it then selects the second variable that can explain the remaining percentage of the outcome variable.

*Table 3 Regression analysis predicting Self-Concept from Attachment Pattern*

| Step | Prediction | Unstandardized $\beta$ | Standardized $\beta$ | $t$ | $R$ | $R^2$ | $F$ |
|------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1 | Attachment with Mother | .434 | .383 | 5.678** | .383 | .146 | 32.242** |
| 2 | Attachment with Father | .312 | .275 | 3.785** | .444 | .197 | 22.979** |
| | Attachment with Peers | .296 | .250 | 3.443** | | | |

*\*\*p<.01*

The above table suggests that, model 1 shows attachment with mother significantly predicts self-concept (Unstandardized $\beta$= .434, $\beta$ constant=.383, $t$ (186) = 5.678, p<.01). Attachment with mother also explained a significant amount of variance in self-concept (R=.383, $R^2$= .146, F (1,188) = 32.242, p<.01). Model 2 shows that two predictors explained 19.7% of the variance (R= .444, $R^2$= .197, F (2,187) = 22.979, p<.01). It was found that attachment pattern with mother significantly predicted self-concept (Unstandardized $\beta$= .312, $\beta$ constant =.275, p<.01) as did attachment pattern with peers (Unstandardized $\beta$= .296, $\beta$ constant =.250, p<.01). The step wise regression analysis did not reveal any significant prediction of attachment with fathers on self-concept and for this reason this data is not shown.

The results of the step wise regression analysis supported hypothesis one partially as only attachment pattern with mother and peers was found to significantly predict self-concept and attachment with father was not found to significantly predict self-concept among middle adolescents.

Hypothesis two states that attachment with mother, father and peers will significantly predict perceived social competence among middle adolescents. The step wise regression method was followed to study the attachment pattern that significantly predicts social competence.

***Table 4 Regression analysis predicting Perceived Social Competence from Attachment Pattern***

| Step | Prediction | Unstandardized $\beta$ | Standardized $\beta$ | T | R | $R^2$ | F |
|------|-----------|---------|---------|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| 1 | Attachment with mother | .090 | .260 | 3.685** | .260 | .067 | 13.578** |

**p<.01*

From the above table, it can be inferred that model 1 shows attachment with mother significantly predicts perceived social competence (Unstandardized $\beta$= .09, $\beta$ constant =.26, *t (186) = .36, p<.01*). Attachment with mother also explained a significant amount of variance in social competence (*R=260, $R^2$= .067, F (1,188) = 13.578, p<.01*). The step wise regression analysis did not reveal any significant prediction of attachment with fathers and peers on perceived social competence and for this reason this data is not shown. Hence, it was found that only attachment with mother significantly predicted social competence and attachment with father and peers did not.

The results of the step wise regression analysis supported hypothesis two partially as only attachment pattern with mother was found to significantly predict perceived social competence and attachment with father and peers was not found to significantly predict perceived social competence among middle adolescents.

The third hypothesis states that self-concept will significantly predict perceived social competence among middle adolescents. The simultaneous or enter regression method was followed to study whether self-concept that significantly predicts perceived social competence. In the simultaneous or enter method all the variables are entered simultaneously but the order in which the variables are entered is not relevant.

***Table 5 Regression analysis predicting perceived social competence from self-concept***

| Step | Prediction | Unstandardized $\beta$ | Standardized $\beta$ | t | R | $R^2$ | F |
|------|-----------|---------|---------|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| 1 | Self-Concept | .079 | .240 | 3.383** | .240 | .057 | 11.442** |

**p<.01*

The above table suggests that model 1 shows self-concept significantly predicts perceived social competence (Unstandardized $\beta$= .079, $\beta$ constant =.24, *t (186) = 3.38, p<.01*). Self-Concept also

explained a significant amount of variance in social competence ($R= .240$, $R^2= .057$, $F (1,188) = 11.44$, $p<.01$).

The results of the simultaneous or enter regression analysis supported hypothesis 3, as self-concept was found to significantly predict perceived social competence among middle adolescents.

*Discussion*

The purpose of the research is to study the influence of attachment pattern with mother, father and peers on self-concept and perceived social competence among middle adolescents. In total, 190 middle adolescents between the age group of 14 to 16 were selected from three aided schools in Bangalore to participate in the study. 103 females and 87 males represented the sample with an average age of 15.1. Participants with both biological parents present in their life were selected to be a part of the study.

A relationship was found between all three variables of the study. A significant relationship was found between attachment pattern with mother, father and peers with self-concept, a significant relationship was found between attachment pattern with mother, father and peers with perceived social competence and finally a significant relationship was found between self-concept and perceived social competence

As a significant relationship was met between all the variables, regression analysis was carried out. According to the first hypothesis, attachment with mother, father and peers significantly predicts self-concept. However, only attachment with mother and attachment with peers was found to significantly predict self-concept among middle adolescents. Attachment with father did not significantly predict self-concept. This finding has been supported by previous researchers. A study conducted by Selby (2000) among college students revealed that attachment pattern with mother significantly contributed to their positive self-concept among both men and women. The study also found that attachment with peers was significantly related to positive views of self among men. However, gender differences were not explored in the current study. Therefore, the higher the individual's attachment with mother and peers the better their view of self is. Another study carried out by Nishikawa, Hagglof, and Sundbom (2009) showed how peer attachment contributes to self-concept and internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors among Japanese adolescents. The study demonstrated that attachment with peers does significantly affect how one views oneself. Their perceptions of their relationships effect how they perceive themselves and their emotional and behavioral issues.

The second hypothesis states that attachment with mother, father and peers significantly predicts perceived social competence among middle adolescents. However, only attachment with mother was found to significantly predict perceived social competence. Attachment with father and

attachment with peers did not significantly predict social competence among middle adolescents. The results are supported by previous researchers of attachment theory. According to the study by Baharudin, Chiah and Zulkefly (2010), mother's attachment was found to significantly contribute to the adolescent's pro-social behavior among peers.

The findings of the study suggest that attachment with mother formed during the early years of life does significantly contribute to the understanding of self during adolescence and also affects one's relationship with others outside of the mother-child relationship. The findings are consistent with previous research findings. According to Bowlby (1980) the parental attachments are a source of security and support which contributes to the adolescent's internal working model of self. Casidy et al. (1996) suggested that having a secure relationship with parents enables an adolescent to develop secure representations and expectations from their peers which leads to development of the quality of relationship with their peers (as cited in Claudia & Huebner, 2008). Bowbly's (1989) attachment theory concludes that there is a causal relationship between attachment with parents and one's ability to develop positive relationships with others (as cited in Carlivati, 2001). Piaget (1965) also studied that adolescents use these relationships outside their homes to develop their identity and a sense of self by comparing their views and opinions with others (as cited in Pant, 2009). It was also found that attachment with peers also significantly leads to self-concept of the adolescent. As mentioned by Parker et al. (2006) that during adolescence, children increasingly question who they are and are concerned about how other perceive them (as cited in Sebastian, Burnett & Blackemore, 2008). Hence, both mother and peer attachment significantly contributes to the self-concept of the adolescent. And attachment with mother is also significantly related to the adolescent's perceived social competence.

The third hypothesis states that self-concept significantly predicts perceived social competence among middle adolescents. This hypothesis was met through regression analysis. According to the study done by Mpofu and Thomas (2006) as individuals self-concept and social competence are significantly related when they are placed in within race groups rather than between race groups. As all the participants in the study were Indians, their self-concept was found to significantly relate with their perceived social-competence. An article by Marshall (1989) also suggests that self-concept affects the way we relate with others and our behavior towards them. Self-concept, hence, helps in being more socially competent with others. Welsh and Bierman (2014) stated that the adolescent's self-identity (the understanding of self) plays an important role in their interaction with their peers. The greater the understanding of their self the more the adolescent is able to associate themselves with their peer groups social behavior. Therefore, research findings have proved that an adolescent's self-concept is significantly related to their social competence.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The aim of the study was to explore the relationship between attachment pattern with parents and peers, self-concept and perceived social competence among middle adolescents. Attachment pattern is a social behavior developed through the parent-child relationship in the early years of life. This pattern helps in developing the social and emotional skills necessary to build successful relationship with others. Self-concept is the understanding that one has of oneself. It includes the view of one's thoughts, feelings and behaviors. And social competence is the extent to which the individual is capable of meeting personal goals while maintaining good relations with others. The review of literature provides a good understanding that the attachment pattern with parents and peers is related to both self-concept and social competence and a relationship also exists between self-concept and social competence among adolescents.

The study attempted to predict the influence of attachment with mother, father and peers on self-concept and perceived social competence and also to study the prediction between self-concept and perceived social competence among middle adolescents.190 adolescents between the ages of 14 to 16 (101 females and 89 males) were selected from Bangalore through the purposive sampling method. After the data collection process was completed, analysis of the data was followed. Firstly, the test of normality was done to explore if the data is normally distributed. As the data was not normally distributed, the non-parametric test, Spearman Correlation Coefficient test was used to study the relationship between the variables. A significant relationship was found between all the variables of the study. The variables of the study were further analyzed to study the prediction between them through regression analysis.

Through Regression analysis, the hypotheses were tested. According to the first hypothesis, attachment with father, mother and peers will significantly predict self-concept. However, the study found that only attachment with mother and peers significantly predicted self-concept and attachment with father did not. According to the second hypothesis, attachment with mother, father and peers will significantly predict perceived social competence. However, the study found that only attachment with mother significantly predicted perceived social competence and attachment with father and peers did not. According to the third hypothesis, self-concept will significantly predict perceived social competence.

The study has some significant strengths. First, the three variables have not been explored together by previous researchers. Second, there were no studies linking attachment to self-concept and perceived social competence in India. And no study has explored the relationship between self-concept and perceived social competence in India. Third, as most of the significant findings have been studied on early and late adolescents, very few research studies has been done on middle adolescents. So this study has explored the relationship between attachment with parents and peers on self-concept and social competence among middle adolescents. Fourth, there has been very little research done to predict the relationship between self-concept and

perceived social competence among any age range of populations and this study has attempted to explore the prediction between these two variables. Fifth, the self-concept questionnaire used in the study is an Indian standardized questionnaire used to assess the how individual in the Indian context view themselves. Therefore, this is an important strength, as it has used a culturally standardized tool to measure self-concept.

*Implications*

There some important implications of the study. The study will help to reflect the mental health of the adolescents in today's scenario. From the results, it can be observed that secure attachment with mother paves the way for the adolescent to develop secure relationships with peers and a better understanding of self. In addition, the better the self-concept the adolescent has about himself or herself, the better he/she is able to meet his/her goals while maintaining good relations with peers. Therefore, the mother-child relationship is an important relationship that will significantly affect the adolescent's mental health. Hence, much importance should be given to develop a good attachment with the mother. And an adolescent who has a good relationship with his/her peers has a good understanding of self, thus, strategies can be developed to help the adolescent to have a better view of self so that he/she can also develop a good metal health.

*Limitations*

A few limitations were observed in the study. Firstly, there were some time constraints in answering the questions because of the total number of all the questionnaires. And those who did complete might have experienced mental fatigue in answering them. Secondly, the presence of response bias in answering the questions. Response bias means that the participants might have filled the questionnaires in a socially desirable manner which could have affected the results. Thirdly, as the sample size of the total number of participants was only 190, it may not be generalisable to a large number of adolescent population.

*Recommendations for future Research*

There are several recommendations for future research. Firstly, the study only attempts to explore the strength of the secure attachment pattern with parents. Future research can focus on how different styles of parental attachment affect an adolescent's self-concept and perceived social competence. Secondly, like the current study, most research studies attempting to study attachment pattern, self-concept and social competence have focused on quantitative methods. By using qualitative methods to study these variables a greater understanding of these relationships can be explored by studying the global themes that emerge. Thirdly, future research can also focus on the gender differences between attachment, self-concept and social competence of adolescents.

In conclusion, attachment with mother has been found to significantly predict how an adolescent views oneself and how socially competent they are. Attachment with peers was also found to

predict self-concept of the adolescent. In addition, the better an adolescent has an understanding of self the more socially competent he/she is.

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**APPENDICES**

**Apppendix A**

**Descriptive Statistics**

|  | N | Mean | | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | Statistic | Statistic | Std. Error | Statistic |
| Attachment with mother | 190 | 96.61 | 1.079 | 14.880 |
| Attachment with father | 190 | 94.87 | 1.139 | 15.696 |
| Attachment with peers | 190 | 90.18 | 1.032 | 14.225 |
| Self-concept | 190 | 174.94 | 1.224 | 16.867 |
| Perceived Social Competence | 190 | 21.11 | .401 | 5.529 |
| Valid N (list wise) | 190 |  |  |  |

**Appendix B**

INVENTORY OF PARENT AND PEER ATTACHMENT

|  | Items | Almost Never or Never True | Not very often True | Sometimes True | Often True | Almost always or Always True |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | My mother respects my feeling. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | I feel my mother does a good job as a mother. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | I wish I had a different mother. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | My mother accepts me as I am. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | I like to get my mother's point of view on things I am concerned about. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | I feel it's no use letting my feelings show around my mother | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7 | My mother can tell when I am upset about something. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | Talking over my problems with my mother makes me feel ashamed or foolish. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9 | My mother expects too much from me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | I get upset easily around | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | my mother. | | | | | |
| 11 | I get upset a lot more than my mother knows about. | 1 Almost | 2 Not | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often | 5 Almost |
| 12 | When we discuss things, my mother cares about my point of view. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13 | My mother trusts my judgment. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14 | My mother has her own problems so I don't bother her with mine. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15 | My mother helps me understand myself better. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16 | I tell my mother about my problems and troubles. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17 | I feel angry with my mother. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18 | I don't get much attention from my mother. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19 | My mother helps me to talk about my difficulties. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20 | My mother understands me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21 | When I am angry about something my mother tries to be understanding. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22 | I trust my mother. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23 | My mother doesn't understand what I am going through these days. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24 | I can count on my mother when I need to get something off my chest. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25 | If my mother knows something is bothering me she asks me about it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | Never or Never True | very often True | True | True | always or Always True |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | I like to get my friends point of view on things I am concerned about. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2 | My friends can tell when I'm upset about something. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3 | When we discuss things, my friends care about my point of view. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4 | Talking over my problems with my friends makes me feel ashamed or foolish. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5 | I wish I had different friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6 | My friends understand me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7 | My friends encourage me to talk about my difficulties. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8 | My friends accept me as I am. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9 | I feel the need to be in touch with my friends more often. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10 | My friends don't understand what I'm going through these days. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11 | I feel alone or apart when I am with my friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12 | My friends listen to what I have to say. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13 | When we discuss things, my mother cares about my point of view. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14 | My friends are fairly easy to talk to. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15 | When I am angry about something, my friends try to be understanding. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16 | My friends help me to understand myself better. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17 | My friends care about how I am feeling. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18 | I feel angry with my friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| 19 | I can count on my friends when I need to get something off my chest. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 20 | I trust my friends. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 21 | My friends respect my feelings. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 22 | I get upset a lot more than my friends know about. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23 | It seems as if my friends are irritated with me or no reason. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 24 | I can tell my friends about my problems and troubles. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 25 | If my friends know something is bothering me, they ask me about it. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## APPENDIX C

SELF-CONCEPT QUESTIONNAIRE

| 1. | Do your friends come to you for advice? | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Usually not | Never |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 2. | What do you think about your appearance? | Very Beautiful | Beautiful | Satisfactory | Not satisfactory | Ugly |
| 3 | How do you find yourself in doing physical work? | Very strong | Strong | Average | Delicate | Very Delicate |
| 4 | How do you find your temperament? | Always Cheerful | Cheerful | Normal | Sometimes happy | Always unhappy |
| 5 | How do you like school studies | Very good | Good | Average | Not good | Not good at all |
| 6 | Do you believe in religious customs and tradition? | Very much | Usually Normally | Normally | Sometimes | Never |

| 7 | Do you participate in criticizing others | Always | Mostly | Generally | Not usually | Never |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Do you express your ideas frankly in the presence of others? | Always | Mostly | Normally | Sometimes | Never |
| 9 | How do you like your complexion? | Very Beautiful | Beautiful | Normal | Not so Beautiful | Ugly |
| 10 | Do you think of your as a cheerful person? | Always | Mostly | Normally | No | Never |
| 11 | Do you behave abnormally also | Always | Mostly | Sometimes | Seldom | Never |
| 12 | Do you think of yourself as an experienced person? | Highly | Usually | Average | Less experienced | Without any experience |
| 13 | Do you think about your teachers? | Always | Mostly | Normally | Usually not | Never |
| 14 | Do you think of yourself to be a cool tempered man? | Very much | Usually | Average | Some Disturbed | Much Disturbed |
| 15 | Are you regular in doing your home work assignments? | Always | Mostly | Normally | Sometimes | Never |
| 16 | Do you insult others? | Never | Not often | Usually | Mostly | Always |
| 17 | Do you have difficulty in understanding something when the teacher explains in the class? | Never | Usually | Generally | Often feel difficulty | Usually feel Difficulty |

| 18 | Do you think if you get an opportunity you can discover something new? | Definitely | Most Probably | Probably | Doubtful | Not at all |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19 | Do you feel irritated if somebody finds fault with your work? | Never | Usually Not | Sometimes | Usually | Always |
| 20 | How do you find your personality? | Most attractive | Attractive | Normal | Unattractive | Totally Unattractive |
| 21 | How do you like the company of other? | Always good | Mostly good | Usually good | Sometimes dislike | Never like |
| 22 | How much are you satisfied with your height? | Fully satisfied | Satisfied | Usually Satisfied | Not so Satisfied | Unsatisfied |
| 23 | Do you feel irritated while you face petty difficulties? | Always | Mostly Not | Generally | Sometimes | Always |
| 24 | Are you coward by nature | Not at all | Not much | Normal | Usually | Very much |
| 25 | How much are you satisfied with the present position of your studies in class? | Completely Satisfied | Somewhat Satisfied | Always | Somewhat Dissatisfied | Total Dissatisfaction |
| 26 | How do you like school examination? | Like very much | Mostly like | Generally like | Seldom like | Never like |
| 27 | How is your voice? | Very good | Good | Normal | Not good | Unsatisfactory |
| 28 | Are you | Always | Usually | Normal | No | Not at all |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | curious to know the end while reading a novel or seeing a movie? | | | | | |
| 29 | How do you find your health? | Very Good | Good | Average | Weak | Feeble |
| 30 | How is your attendance in the class? | Always present | Usually Present | Average | Generally Absent | Usually absent |
| 31 | How much are you satisfied with your height? | Fully Satisfied | Satisfied | Normal | Somewhat Dissatisfied | Fully Dissatisfied |
| 32 | Do you try to get first position in the test given in the class? | Always | Usually | Generally | Often Not | Never |
| 33 | Do you take care of the merits and demerits of a work before doing it? | Always | Usually | Generally | Usually Not | Never |
| 34 | Where do you place yourself while speaking truth? | Always Speak Truth | Usually Speak Truth | Generally Speak Truth | Usually Hesitate in Speaking Truth | Always have to resort to falsehood |
| 35 | Where do you place yourself in obeying public rules e.g. rules pertaining to public places, like road, park, railway station etc? | Always Obey Rules | Usually Obey Rules | Generally Obey rules | Usually do not obey rules | Never Obey rules |
| 36 | Are you more intelligent than your colleagues? | Certainly more | Usually | Generally | Less | Not at all |
| 37 | Do you take part in | Always | Usually | Generally | Usually Not | Never |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | organizing when your classmates go to picnics etc? | | | | | |
| 38 | Do you solve by yourself the difficulties and problems of your studies? | Always solve | Usually solve | Generally solve | Usually cannot solve | Always take help from others |
| 39 | How much do you attend to artistic aspects of the photograph while seeing or making it? | Give very much attention | Give much attention | Give average attention | Give some attention | Do not give any attention |
| 40 | What will you do if you are doing some important work and your friends ask you to accompany them for a walk? | Will start immediately | Will go after thinking for sometime | Will keep silent | Will not go after thinking for sometime | Will refuse at once |
| 41 | While taking the examination you are not able to answer some question and a book of the same subject is lying near you, will you take help of the book? | Will never do such thing | Do not have the courage to do in spite of will | Generally do not do this | Will use the book if I get an opportunity | Will immediately use the book |
| 42 | If you get an opportunity to drink water in the house of so called low castes persons, what will you do? | Shall take water | Will take water after some consideration | Will care for cleanliness | Will take water but would tell nobody | Will not take water |
| 43 | Do you hesitate | Do not | Sometimes | Generally | Usually | Always |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | in mixing with persons of opposite sex | hesitate at all | hesitate | do not hesitate | hesitate | Hesitate |
| 44 | You are standing in the bus que for a long time when the bus comes; the conductor takes some passengers and stops at your turn because there are no spaces in the bus, what will do in these circumstances? | Will wait for the next bus | Will request the conductor | Will run and try to board the bus | Will push the other passengers and try to board the bus | Will make a noise |
| 45 | What will do if you come know immoral character of your friend? | Will completely break the friendship | Will the friendship | Will continue but will try to make him understand | Will continue friendship as it was | Will strengthen the friendship |
| 46 | You have to do four tasks (a) you have to call the doctor to show sick brother (b) you have to do the preparation for going out the next day (c) you have to read novel (d) the friend is going away, you have to go to see him. What will you do in the first place? | Will call the doctor to show the sick brother | Will prepare for going out | Will read novel | Will go to see the friend | Will not do any of the above mentioned work |
| 47 | When your friend gives you one | Will return one hundred rupees to | Will tell the friend at once | Will return the 1100 rupees later | If the friend does not come to | Shall take out one hundred rupees |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | thousand rupees to keep when you count they are eleven thousand. What will you do? | the friend at once | | | know, will take out one hundred rupees if possible | |
| 48 | Do you like to do the work keeping in mind the desire of others? | Always do the work keeping in mind of other | Usually so the work keeping in mind the desires of others | Generally do the work keeping in mind the desires of others | Sometimes do not care for the liking of others | Always do according to one's will |

**APPENDIX D**

SOCIAL COMPETENCE TOOL

Please indicate how much these statements describe you.

1. I avoid making other kids look bad.
   o Not at all like me
   o A little of the time
   o Somewhat like me
   o A lot like me
   o Exactly like me

2. If two people are fighting, I find a way to work things out.
   o Not at all like me
   o A little of the time
   o Somewhat like me
   o A lot like me
   o Exactly like me

3. When I work in school groups, I do my fair share.
   o Not at all like me
   o A little of the time
   o Somewhat like me
   o A lot like me
   o Exactly like me

Please indicate how often this happens.
4. Do you get along well with people of different races, cultures and religions?
   o None of the time
   o A little of the time
   o Some of the time
   o Most of the time
   o All of the time
5. Do you listen to other students ideas?
   o None of the time
   o A little of the time
   o Some of the time
   o Most of the time
   o All of the time
6. Do you control your anger when you have a disagreement with a friend?
   o None of the time
   o A little of the time
   o Some of the time
   o Most of the time
   o All of the time
7. Can you discuss a problem with a friend without making things worse?
   o None of the time
   o A little of the time
   o Some of the time
   o Most of the time
   o All of the time
8. Do you follow the rules at a par, theatre or sports event?
   o None of the time
   o A little of the time
   o Some of the time
   o Most of the time
   o All of the time
9. Do you respect other points of view, even if you disagree?
   o None of the time
   o A little of the time
   o Some of the time
   o Most of the time
   o All of the time

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